

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/690,753

Examiner

Eric A. Gates

Applicant(s)

PAINE, LESLIE

Art Unit

3722

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to 20 June 2006.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1 and 6-9.
3. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
 5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☒ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date 3/8/06
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____

Monica S. Carter
MONICA CARTER
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Mr. J. Warren Lytle, Jr., on 31 August 2006.

The application has been amended as follows:

Claim 1. (Currently Amended) A fastening system comprising a stud and a sheet of cover material; the stud being formed with a groove, and the sheet of cover material being formed with a hole and two non-aligned tangential slits, that diverge with increasing distance from the hole, wherein the hole has a boundary, and a part of the boundary of the hole which is a continuation of the tangential slits includes part of a first circle; wherein a remaining part of the boundary of the hole forms part of a second circle of greater radius ~~that~~ than said first circle; and whereby, in use, the stud is pushed through the hole until the groove in the stud snaps into engagement with the hole in the sheet of cover material.

Claim 7. (Currently Amended) A fastening system according to claim 6, wherein the stud is elongate and has an annular groove near each end, and the sheet of cover

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material is folded and has said hole and two slits on one side of said fold and has another of said hole and two slits on the other side of said fold whereby, in use, each of the annular grooves snaps into engagement with a respective one of each of the holes.

Claim 9. (Currently Amended) A fastening system according to claim 1, wherein the stud is elongate and has an annular groove near each end, and the sheet of cover material is folded and has said hole and two slits on one side of said fold and has another of said hole and two slits on the other side of said fold whereby, in use, each of the annular grooves snaps into engagement with a respective one of each of the holes.

2. Claims 1 and 6-9 are allowed. Claim 1 is the independent claim.

3. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The closest prior art of record is U.K. Patent Application GB 2065555 A to Rubenstein, which was applied to the claims in the office action mailed 20 March 2006. Suffice it to say, Rubenstein does not disclose "wherein a remaining part of the boundary of the hole forms part of a second circle of greater radius than said first circle", and as such does not anticipate the instant invention as disclosed in independent claim 1.

Furthermore, there is no combinable teaching in the prior art of record that would reasonably motivate one having ordinary skill in the art to so modify the teachings of Rubenstein, and thus, for at least the foregoing reasoning, the prior art of record does not render obvious the present invention as set forth in independent claim 1.

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Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Eric A. Gates whose telephone number is 571-272-5498. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday 7:45-6:15.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Monica Carter can be reached on 571-272-4475. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



EAG
31 August 2006



MONICA CARTER
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER